

III. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The text of all claims under examination is submitted, and the status of each is identified. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles comprising:

capturing a target substance in a first suspension having a first volume directly or indirectly ~~by~~ with magnetic particles;

separating the magnetic particles from the first suspension by passing the first suspension through a first liquid passage and exerting a magnetic field from outside of a the first liquid passage to the inside of the first liquid passage to thereby attract the magnetic particles to an inner wall of the first liquid passage, at a time of passing a suspension having a first volume and in which the magnetic particles which have captured the target substance are suspended, through the liquid passage;

~~re-suspending~~ suspending the magnetic particles in a liquid having a second volume to obtain a second suspension, wherein the second volume is less than the first volume which have captured the target substance in the suspension, by passing the liquid having a second volume smaller than the first volume of the suspension through the first liquid passage in which the magnetic particles which have captured the target substance have been separated, in a state with the without exerting a magnetic field not exerted on the first liquid passage; and

eluting the target substance from the magnetic particles in the second suspension which have captured the target substance suspended in the liquid, and separating only the magnetic particles to obtain a suspension in which the target substance is concentrated.

2. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 1 wherein;

the magnetic particles are separated from the first suspension by sucking the first suspension from a first container storing a the first volume of suspension, in which the magnetic particles having directly or indirectly captured the target substance are suspended, and then

passing the first suspension through the first liquid passage, ~~with the magnetic field exerted from outside of the liquid passage, to thereby attract the magnetic particles to the inner wall of the liquid passage;~~ and

the magnetic particles are ~~re-suspended~~ suspended in the liquid to create the second suspension by sucking the liquid from a second container storing the liquid, passing the liquid through the first liquid passage and discharging the a second volume of liquid to a suspension into the second container where the second volume of liquid is stored, the second volume being smaller than the first volume of the suspension, without exerting the magnetic field.

3. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 1 wherein;

the first liquid passage includes a suction portion and a discharge portion, and wherein,
the magnetic particles are separated from the first suspension by sucking the first suspension from a first container storing a the first volume of suspension in which the magnetic particles which have captured the target substance are suspended, to a storage section associated with via a liquid the suction portion of the first liquid passage while exerting passage, with the magnetic field exerted from outside to said liquid the suction passage portion and a liquid the discharge portion of the first liquid passage, and discharging the first suspension from said the storage section via said liquid through the discharge portion of the first liquid passage, to thereby attract the magnetic particles to the inner wall of the liquid suction portion and the liquid discharge portion of the first liquid passage; and

the magnetic particles are ~~re-suspended~~ suspended in the liquid by inserting said liquid the suction portion passage and said liquid the discharge portion of the first liquid passage into a second container where the second volume of in which the liquid having a second volume is stored, wherein the second volume being smaller than the first volume of suspension and is substantially the same amount as that of the volume of the storage section, to thereby suck and then sucking the liquid from the second container, passing the liquid through the first liquid passage and discharge discharging the second volume of liquid into the second container, without exerting a magnetic field on the first liquid passage.

4. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 1 wherein, ~~in a container storing the suspension re-suspended in the re-suspension step, further comprising, separating the magnetic particles in the suspension are separated and then re-suspended in a~~ from the liquid having a ~~third~~ the second volume ~~smaller than the second volume,~~ by sucking the liquid from a second container storing the liquid, passing the liquid through the first liquid passage and discharging the ~~suspension, with~~ liquid while a ~~the~~ magnetic field is exerted on the first liquid passage, by means of a pipette apparatus having a second liquid passage in which liquid can pass ~~through both in the a suction direction and the a discharge direction of the liquid,~~ and a storage section communicated with the second liquid passage and having a capacity smaller than the second volume, and also having magnetic force means for exerting and removing a magnetic field to and from the second liquid passage from outside of the second liquid passage.

5. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 2 wherein, ~~in a container storing the suspension re-suspended in the re-suspension step, further comprising, separating the magnetic particles in the suspension are separated and then re-suspended in a~~ from the liquid having a ~~third~~ the second volume ~~smaller than the second volume,~~ by sucking the liquid from a second container storing the liquid, passing the liquid through the first liquid passage and discharging the ~~suspension, with a~~ liquid while the magnetic field is exerted on the first liquid passage, by means of a pipette apparatus having a second liquid passage in which liquid can pass ~~through both in the a suction direction and the a discharge direction of the liquid,~~ and a storage section communicated with the second liquid passage and having a capacity smaller than the second volume, and also having magnetic force means for exerting and removing a magnetic field to and from the second liquid passage from outside of the second liquid passage.

6. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 3 wherein, ~~in a container storing the suspension re-suspended in the re-suspension step, further comprising, separating the magnetic particles in the suspension are separated and then re-suspended in a~~ from the liquid having a ~~third~~ the second volume ~~smaller than the second volume,~~

by sucking the liquid from a second container storing the liquid, passing the liquid through the first liquid passage and discharging the ~~suspension, with a liquid while the~~ magnetic field is exerted on the first liquid passage, by means of a pipette apparatus having a second liquid passage in which liquid can pass ~~through both in the a suction direction and the a discharge direction of the liquid,~~ and a storage section communicated with the second liquid passage and having a capacity smaller than the second volume, and also having magnetic force means for exerting and removing a magnetic field to and from the second liquid passage from outside ~~of the second~~ liquid passage.

7. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 1, wherein ~~the separating of the magnetic particles~~ are separated by ~~comprises~~ shifting ~~all of the~~ liquid stored in a second container to a first container, after ~~having shifted all of the~~ suspension stored in the first container is shifted to the second container, by sucking the liquid stored in the second container via the first liquid passage, and discharging the liquid to the first container via the first liquid passage, ~~with a~~ while exerting the magnetic field ~~exerted on the liquid passage from outside.~~

8. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 2, wherein ~~the separating of the magnetic particles~~ are separated by ~~comprises~~ shifting ~~all of the~~ liquid stored in a the second container to a the first container, after ~~having shifted all of the~~ suspension stored in the first container is shifted to the second container, by sucking the liquid stored in the second container via the first liquid passage, and discharging the liquid to the first container via the first liquid passage, ~~with a~~ while exerting the magnetic field ~~exerted on the liquid passage from outside.~~

9. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 3, wherein ~~the separating of the magnetic particles~~ are separated by ~~comprises~~ shifting ~~all of the~~ liquid stored in a the second container to a the first container, after ~~having shifted all of the~~ suspension stored in the first container is shifted to the second container, by sucking the liquid stored in the second container via the first liquid passage, and discharging the liquid to the first

container via the first liquid passage, ~~with a~~ while exerting the magnetic field ~~exerted on the liquid passage from outside.~~

10. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 4, wherein ~~the separating of the magnetic particles~~ are separated by ~~comprises~~ shifting all of the liquid stored in a the second container to a the first container, after ~~having shifted all of the suspension stored in the first container~~ is shifted to the second container, by sucking the liquid stored in the second container via the first liquid passage, and discharging the liquid to the first container via the first liquid passage, ~~with a~~ while exerting the magnetic field ~~exerted on the liquid passage from outside.~~

11. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 1, wherein the first liquid passage includes a suction portion and a discharge portion, and ~~wherein the separating of the magnetic particles~~ comprises are separated by shifting all of the liquid stored in a second container to a first container, after ~~having shifted all of the suspension stored in the first container~~ is shifted to the second container, by sucking the liquid stored in the second container via a the suction portion of the first liquid suction passage, and discharging the liquid to the first container via a the discharge portion of the first liquid discharge passage, ~~with~~ while exerting a magnetic field ~~exerted on from outside the suction portion liquid suction passage and a~~ the discharge portion of the first liquid discharge passage from outside.

12. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 2, wherein the first liquid passage includes a suction portion and a discharge portion, and ~~wherein the separating of the magnetic particles~~ comprises are separated by shifting all of the liquid stored in a the second container to a the first container, after ~~having shifted all of the suspension stored in the first container~~ is shifted to the second container, by sucking the liquid stored in the second container via a the suction portion of the first liquid suction passage, and discharging the liquid to the first container via a the discharge portion of the first liquid discharge passage, ~~with~~ while exerting a magnetic field ~~exerted on from outside the suction portion liquid suction passage and a~~ the discharge portion of the first liquid discharge passage from outside.

13. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 3, wherein the ~~separating of the~~ magnetic particles ~~comprises~~ are separated by shifting ~~all of the~~ liquid stored in a the second container to a the first container, after ~~having shifted all of the~~ suspension stored in the first container is shifted to the second container, by sucking the liquid stored in the second container via a the suction portion of the first liquid ~~suction~~ passage, and discharging the liquid to the first container via a the discharge portion of the first liquid ~~discharge~~ passage, ~~with a~~ while exerting the magnetic field ~~exerted on~~ from outside the suction portion ~~liquid suction passage~~ and a the discharge portion of the first liquid ~~discharge~~ passage ~~from outside~~.

14. (Currently Amended): A concentration method using magnetic particles according to claim 4, wherein the first liquid passage includes a suction portion and a discharge portion, and ~~wherein the separating of the~~ magnetic particles ~~comprises~~ are separated by shifting ~~all of the~~ liquid stored in a the second container to a the first container, after ~~having shifted all of the~~ suspension stored in the first container is shifted to the second container, by sucking the liquid stored in the second container via a the suction portion of the first liquid ~~suction~~ passage, and discharging the liquid to the first container via a the discharge portion of the first liquid ~~discharge~~ passage, ~~with~~ while exerting a magnetic field ~~exerted on~~ from outside the suction portion ~~liquid suction passage~~ and a the discharge portion of the first liquid ~~discharge~~ passage ~~from outside~~.